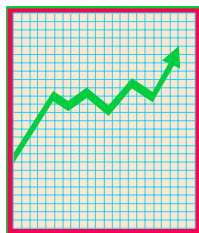




# Waste~Less News

February  
2000

## *Waste Management News for Southwest Washington*



### **Market Stabilization Helps Raise Washington's Recycling Rates**

Washington businesses and residents slightly improved their recycling habits in 1998, although the recycling rate is still lower than the peak achieved in 1995.

According to data collected by the state Department of Ecology (Ecology), the statewide recycling rate for 1998 was 34.1 percent, up from 32.4 percent the year before. In 1989, the Waste Not Washington Act established a 50% recycling goal for the state of Washington. The highest achievement so far was 39.3 percent in 1995. Because both the level of recycling and the resale market drive the number, the market can greatly affect the rate each year. The rate in 1995 was due to unusually high commodity prices.

“Citizen recycling is getting better, but there is vast room for improvement,” said Kip Eagles, Ecology’s recycling-survey coordinator. He noted that access to recycling facilities and good education about how and what to recycle are vital to successful recycling efforts. “Olympia and Tacoma have educated their citizens about recycling and have made it easy to do. The recycling rates in both cities, as well as amount recycled continue to climb. Education seems to be the common link among successful programs”, said Eagles.

Rural counties tend to rely on drop-off boxes where residents can leave their recyclables. Washington counties have some of the best drop-off programs in the country. Urban counties, such as King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, and Spokane, have well-developed curbside programs that offer greater convenience. Either approach can work well with adequate support and education.

The department convened a Recycling Assessment Panel in September 1999. The goal was to:

- Identify successful recycling programs to use as examples for others.
- Examine how to increase markets for recycled materials.
- Identify ways to increase awareness and encourage recycling across the state.
- Expand types of materials being recycled including organics, agricultural waste, and construction materials.

The panel will issue recommendations to the state legislature in February 2000.

There are several ways the public can help raise the recycling rate:

- Be aware of what is thrown away and what is recyclable. Most recycling programs will accept paper products, glass, and metal cans. Some programs accept plastic.
- Buy products that are easy to recycle and are made from recycled materials.
- Consider composting yard and garden wastes at home or participating in a community yard-waste collection program.

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## **The Search is on for Outstanding Waste Reduction and Recycling Programs**

The Washington Department of Ecology is seeking applications for its **annual Waste Prevention, Reduction, and Recycling Awards**.

Six awards will be given to governments, businesses, groups, and individuals that had productive waste-reduction and recycling programs and also demonstrated innovative approaches and outreach efforts during 1999. The awards will be given to the best small-business program (under 100 employees), best large-business program (over 100 employees), best federal facility, best small-government program (under 75,000 population), best large-government program (over 75,000 population), and special recognition for achievement.

**Applications are due March 15** and will be accepted on paper, computer disk, or via e-mail. Application forms are available from Ecology's regional recycling coordinators or by calling 1-800-RECYCLE (1-800-732-9253). They also may be downloaded from the Internet at <http://www.wa.gov/ecology/biblio/0007001.html>

The awards enable the department to recognize businesses and government agencies for their waste reduction and recycling activities. Ecology appreciates the opportunity to spotlight those who have taken the initiative in creating programs that support the community as well as Washington's environmental ethic.

The awards will be issued on May 2, 2000, during the Washington State Recycling Association's annual conference in Pasco.

### **Cash Awards for Washington Public Schools**

Does your school have an innovative or outstanding waste reduction and recycling program? It could be one of many schools sharing up to \$15,000 for the waste reduction and recycling public school awards offered by the Department of Ecology in 2000.

**The deadline for applications is Friday, March 17, 2000.** Applications will be judged on the basis of comprehensive, efficient, and innovative approaches to waste reduction and recycling during the 1999-2000 school year. Schools with the most outstanding waste reduction and recycling programs will each win between \$1,000-2,500. Note: Schools that received an award of \$2,500 in 1998-99 are not eligible to apply again until 2001.

For more information or an application packet please contact:

Michelle Payne, School Awards Coordinator  
Department of Ecology, Solid Waste and Financial Assistance Program  
PO Box 47775, Olympia WA 98504-7775  
1-800-RECYCLE (e-mail: [mdav461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:mdav461@ecy.wa.gov))

Or visit our web site at [www.wa.gov/ecology/swfa/school9900/index.htm](http://www.wa.gov/ecology/swfa/school9900/index.htm) If you have special accommodation needs, Michelle can also be reached at (360) 407-6129 voice or (360) 407-6006 TDD.



## Worm School 2000

Now you can master critical fundamentals, sharpen your strategic goals, and integrate powerful resources in this unique program of instruction and training in best management practices. Make plans now to attend the March 24-25<sup>th</sup> event in Portland, Oregon.

As vermicomposting programs and business opportunities become more widespread, it has become increasingly important to gain the understanding necessary to incorporate various streams of knowledge into a comprehensive format. Questions arise concerning a wide variety of issues, ranging from simple—the mechanics of operating a worm bin—to the complex, such as “What factors need to be considered in operating a large-scale vermicomposting system?”

The Vermicomposting in Waste Management curriculum provides a course of instruction and training that will give you the resources and understanding you seek. This intensive two-day seminar is conducted by leading experts who provide a comprehensive and in-depth view of the major issues and concerns. The executive conference room/classroom allows attendees to closely examine problem areas and to interact with instructors in a lively discovery/discussion format.

In this Seminar you will learn more about who is in the business, how are they doing it, how do I get started, and what steps must be taken along the way. For more information about this workshop contact VermiCo at (541) 476-9626 or visit their website at [www.vermico.com/school.htm](http://www.vermico.com/school.htm)

## Washington Environmental Education Awards

The Environmental Education Association of Washington (EEAW) is seeking nominations for four award categories in environmental education. Individuals, organizations, and programs are eligible for awards. The criteria listed will provide a guide as to how the nominations will be evaluated.

- 1. Outstanding Environmental Educators:** This award recognizes each a formal and non-formal environmental educator in Washington State.
- 2. Community Catalyst:** This award recognizes projects or programs from agencies, schools, or organizations with an educational mission that provided community-based environmental education programs.
- 3. Organizational Excellence:** This award recognizes agencies, businesses, individuals, and/or organizations that best provide for environmental education.

Nominations must be postmarked no later than **February 12, 2000**. Recipients will be notified by March 10, 2000 and will be honored at the EEAW Conference on April 1, 2000. For more information please visit their website at <http://www.eeaw.org/announcement.html>.

The EEAW provides a statewide network for educators, businesses, governments, and communities committed to lifelong education that promotes appreciation and understanding of the environment, bridges cultural and economic differences, and engages citizens in active involvement and community decision-making.

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## **King County Environmental Purchasing – 1999 Annual Report**

In the past year, King County agencies have spent three million dollars on recycled products, an increase of 28% over last year. In addition to again increasing King County's level of support of recycled material markets, these purchases also brought \$525,000 in savings to county agencies.

Details of the purchases, savings, and product experiences of county agencies can be found in the 1999 Annual Report, available on their website at: <http://www.metrokc.gov/procure/green/annrep99.pdf> (Adobe Acrobat PDF format).

## **Get your copy of Ecology's Annual Solid Waste Report**

The Eighth Annual Solid Waste Status Report is now available. You can view the document, using Adobe, by visiting <http://www.wa.gov/ecology/biblio/99509.html>. If you would like to order a hard copy, please contact:

Department of Ecology  
Jean Witt, Publication Coordinator  
(360) 407.7472 or via e-mail at [ecypub@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:ecypub@ecy.wa.gov).

The report contains the 1998 statewide recycling survey results, 1998 disposal information, status of solid waste facilities, an update of waste reduction, recycling, litter and grants activities, remaining disposal capacity information, and 1997 moderate risk waste data.

For information about the report, contact Ellen Caywood at (360) 407-6132 or via e-mail at [ecay461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:ecay461@ecy.wa.gov).

## **Minimum Functional Standards Update**

The solid waste program continues to work toward our goal of updating ch. 173-304 WAC, *Minimum Functional Standards for Solid Waste Handling*. The following activities are scheduled in the next few months.

- External advisory committee meetings are scheduled for early and late January (tentative).
- Following the advisory committee process, we expect to distribute a draft version of the rule within the Solid Waste & Financial Assistance Program as well as to other Ecology programs sometime in February (other programs have identified lead staff for this review).
- A rule usability testing process will be implemented with health departments and permit holders.
- A stakeholder version of the rule will be available for review following program distribution.
- Public review is slated to begin late spring early summer.
- Goal for rule adoption is January 2001.

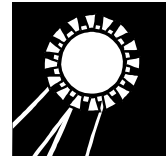
For more specific information on the issues please visit our website at: <http://www.wa.gov/ecology/swfa/304revisions/index.html>, or contact Brian Farmer at (509) 456-6386.

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## Unsung Hero in Clark County

(Written by Peggy Nelson, Public Works, (360) 397-6118 ext. 4350)



Jim Mansfield has shown outstanding commitment to high quality service in his 2 ½ years as a waste reduction specialist with the Clark County Solid Waste Program. Two recent examples of his work illustrate why he has been selected as this month's Public Works Valued Employee.

Jim is responsible for overseeing the county's moderate risk waste program. This includes small quantities of unregulated hazardous wastes from homes or businesses. He is currently working to reopen an MRW collection site in the east county area.

Last year, Jim saw a gap in service and took the initiative to implement a series of well-received MRW "satellite" collection events in the county's rural areas. These were designed to help residents not conveniently served by the county's two fixed collection facilities at the transfer stations.

## Environmental Myths in America: An Average American View

A Sample of Findings from the 1998 National Environmental  
Education and Training Foundation (NEETF)/Roper Report Card

### MYTH #1: Environmentally Damaging Aerosol Cans

Only 35% of Americans know that the only remaining sources of ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) are air conditioners and refrigerators. Despite the fact that the use of CFCs in spray cans has been banned in the U.S. since 1978, the majority of Americans still believe the source of CFCs is from aerosol spray cans.

### MYTH #2: Diaper-Clogged Landfills?

A total of 77% of Americans do not know the greatest source of landfill materials, with a plurality (29%) believing that disposable diapers are the largest source. Just 23% understand that the vast amount of paper products we send to our landfills is the greatest source of landfill material.

### MYTH #5: Tested-Safe Industrial and Household Chemicals

65% of Americans assume that a federal agency is screening household and workplace chemicals for safety. Just 27% understand that the U.S. EPA or any other federal agency does not routinely test industrial and household chemicals.

### MYTH #6: Main Source of Oil Pollution: Tankers, Oil Rigs, and Refineries

84% of Americans don't know the main source of oil in our rivers, lakes, and bays, with a 57% majority believing the leading source of oil pollution is ships, offshore drilling, or coastal refineries. Just 16% know that Americans changing their car oil and disposing of it improperly (down the sink, in the storm drain, or on the ground) is the main source of oil pollution today.

*Waste-Less News* appears quarterly. The Southwest Regional Office of the Department of Ecology is solely responsible for the accuracy of the information contained herein. Ecology is an equal opportunity agency. If you have special accommodation needs, contact Shelly McClure at (360) 407-6398 (Voice) or (360) 407-6306 (TDD). Publication # 00-07-007

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## **Earth Day 2000 Plans in Western Washington Communities**

### **King County-**

The King County Solid Waste Division is planning a youth section at the Earth Day 2000 celebration at Seattle Center on April 22. Currently in the works are:

1. Performance/presentation stage which will showcase the Division's elementary school assembly program *Who Put the R in Earth*, and projects completed through the RecycleArtists Program which include a music/movement piece that demonstrates the creative reuse of resources, and environmental songs composed by students.
2. An exhibit area of student projects.
3. An exhibit area for organizations that have information targeted at youth.

In addition, awards will be presented to student environmental groups and winners of the poster and writing contests currently underway. Students, teachers, or organizations interested in participating in the Earth Day Youth Section can call Donna Miscolta at (206) 296-4477 or Greg Shiring at (206) 296-4432.

### **Island County-**

A coalition of Whidbey islanders organized by Janet Hall, Program Coordinator for the Island County/WSU Waste Warrior Program, are planning an all-island celebration to take place on April 22, 2000 at the Greenbank Farm. The farm is a special place for residents. They came together and voted to purchase the farm in order to preserve it from development.

Earth Day 2000 at the Whidbey Island Greenbank Farm will be a blend of family fun with hands-on activities to inspire informed action by residents. Their goal is to preserve, restore, and celebrate Island County beaches, forests, prairies, streams, wetlands, wildlife, and people. Various activities are being planned to encourage active, public ownership of the Greenbank Farm and to educate participants about the seven wonders of Whidbey. For more information contact Janet Hall at (360) 679-7391.

### **Thurston County-**

A group of non-profit and government representatives, under the coordination of Bob Simmons WSU Extension office, has been meeting to plan activities for Earthweek 2000.

Earthweek 2000 will be dedicated to honoring the earth and those local organizations who are striving to protect and restore it. The event will begin with the Procession of the Species Parade on Saturday April 15, kicking off a full week of environmentally related activities sponsored by local agencies and organizations. Activities will range from workshops and presentations to action projects that will occur throughout the week and on Earthday Saturday (April 22, 2000). They hope to be able to provide a wide range of activities that will attract a diversity of participants. All local environmentally related organizations are invited to organize an activity that will be jointly advertised. The intent is to raise the visibility of these organizations and increase interest in them.

For more information please contact Bob Simmons at (360) 786-5445, ext. 7915.

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## **EPA Funds a Tool to Guide Local Governments in Purchasing Green Products and Services**

Under a grant from EPA, the National Association of Counties (NACo's) has developed the *Environmental Purchasing Starter Kit* to help local governments set up a cost-effective environmental purchasing program.

The kit is designed for purchasing agents, county and city managers, recycling coordinators, local elected officials, product users, and vendors. The kit includes the following components:

- Case studies on energy efficiency and pest control
- Sample purchasing resolution
- Glossary of environmental purchasing terms
- Baseline survey for internal local government use

EPA's Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) program has created a variety of resources to assist federal agencies in "greening" their purchasing practices. Later this year, the EPP Program will be releasing several Internet access tools to accommodate users with all levels of environmental purchasing experience.

The tools will include a database of environmental information for products and services, an interactive general training tool, a "How to do EPP" tutorial, and a Promising Practices Guide for "greening" contracting practices.

The Starter Kit is available at NACo's web site at: <http://www.naco.org/programs/envIRON/purchase.cfm>  
When the EPA tools are released, they will be available at: <http://www.epa.gov/opptintr/epp>.

## **Communities Reach Record-Setting Waste Reduction Levels**

The Institute for Local Self-Reliance (ILSR) recently completed a study of U.S. communities diverting between 40% and 65% of their residential solid waste from disposal. The results of this study will soon be published in a 171-page report, *Cutting the Waste Stream in Half: Record-Setting Communities Show How* (EPA-530-R-99-013). The report offers detailed community profiles, specific cost information, waste reduction calculations and methodology, and a list of definitions.

The result of this research is good news for communities hoping to reduce dependence on disposal. Reuse and recycling (including composting) can cut their waste stream in half. The 18 diverse U.S. communities studied are recovering 40 – 65% of their residential waste. Most report 50% and higher levels. Some are also reducing their municipal solid waste (residential, institutional, and commercial waste) at high levels. One encouraging finding is that these high waste reduction levels are largely being achieved cost-effectively.

**To order for free:** Send your request for Order # **EPA 530-R-99013** to:

National Service Center for Environmental Publications  
PO Box 42419, Cincinnati, OH 45242-2419  
Or by phone at 1-800-490-9198 or fax (513) 489-8695



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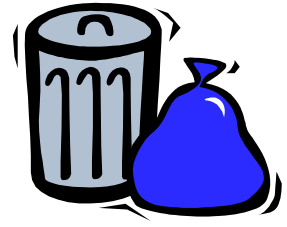
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## Mark Your Calendars for the Next Westside Solid Waste Coordinators Meeting!

**Date:** Feb. 22, 2000

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

**Location:** City of Tacoma's, Central Wastewater Treatment  
Facility in the Transmission Conference Room



Come and hear about the future of Solid Waste. Brian Farmer, Ecology's Coordinator for the Rule Revision will share the process used to develop the revisions and provide an overview of the draft MFS, Minimum Functional Standards for comment. Cheryl Strange is leading the Ecology team updating the state plan and would like to hear from local governments about how solid waste has changed and visions for where Washington State should head in the future. Cullen Stephenson, Solid Waste & Financial Assistance Program Manager will review the highlights of the Recycling Assessment Panel's recommendations to the legislature and share any pending legislative bills related to solid waste. We will also have time for a roundtable discussion. There will be goodies, but feel free to bring a sack lunch if the anticipated 1:00 p.m. time of adjournment is too late for you. Please come with your questions and comments and **remember to RSVP to Jan**

**Lingenfelter** at (425) 649-7160 or e-mail [JLIN460@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:JLIN460@ecy.wa.gov)

The Waste-Less News should not create waste. If we need to make changes to our mailing list, please contact Shelly McClure at (360) 407-6398. If you would like to receive a copy of the newsletter via e-mail please send a message to: [smcc461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:smcc461@ecy.wa.gov) with the subject line reading, "Please add me to the e-mail distribution list for Waste-Less News".

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